



State Water Resources Control Board



Arnold Schwarzenegger
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Protection

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption.
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ERASE THE WASTE **Los Angeles County Storm Water** **Pollution Solutions Education Campaign**

Background

Storm water pollution is a serious problem in Los Angeles County, with significant impacts on the region's water quality, environmental resources, plants and wildlife, and public health and safety. The issue also has significant economic impacts – as clean-up measures are extremely costly, and poor water quality and unsafe beach conditions threaten Los Angeles' tourism-driven revenues.

To address this critical issue, the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) is sponsoring a comprehensive, two-year, \$5 million public education program to measurably reduce storm water pollution in Los Angeles County. SWRCB's primary mandate is to preserve, enhance and restore the quality of California's waters. This campaign – the first countywide storm water public education campaign under SWRCB's auspices – is a further demonstration of the State's commitment to protect our inland, coastal and ground water sources and its priority focus to improve water quality to the benefit of Los Angeles County's 10 million residents. Total campaign funding comes from California's Cleanup and Abatement Account (CAA), which derives funds from court judgments and administrative sanctions levied against corporate, government and industry polluters. All CAA funds, by law, must be used for clean water purposes, and do not represent taxpayer dollars.

Campaign Overview

SWRCB's Los Angeles County-focused storm water public education effort is built around the theme, *Erase the Waste* – a positive, empowering theme that encourages all residents and stakeholders to take ownership of their communities, help reduce and prevent storm water pollution from the local landscape, and *"be part of the pollution solution."*

The multifaceted, multiethnic campaign will primarily reach out to the region's "greatest polluters, most likely to change their polluting behaviors" – an audience of more than seven million residents, approximately 72 percent of the total County population. This group represents all ethnicities, genders and levels of socio-economic status. The campaign also includes multiple opportunities to engage school-aged children, business and environmental stakeholders, and a diverse group of community-based organizations.

The *Erase the Waste* campaign will convey action-oriented pollution prevention messages to residents where they live, work, shop and play. The campaign places an emphasis on priority regional pollutants including trash, cigarette butts, animal waste, pesticides and fertilizer. The campaign also underscores the State of California's commitments to environmental justice and integrated environmental school education.

Key Campaign Elements

- ☛ **Advertising** – A multi-media paid advertising campaign will be the first venue to deliver *Erase the Waste* messages to a mass audience. The campaign will employ English and Spanish print, radio and television advertisements - including use of the first paid, network television advertising to address the storm water issue in the Los Angeles media market. The campaign uses a combination of dramatic and humorous approaches to illustrate the compelling human consequences of pollution and encourage pollution-reducing actions. The first wave of advertising will launch on August 4, 2003.
- ☛ **Community Outreach** – The campaign will include culturally relevant strategies and materials in multiple languages to reach diverse segments of LA County's population. The campaign will take a collaborative approach to educating the public by actively engaging key community leaders and organizations to be part of the campaign's development and implementation. *Erase the Waste* will encourage residents to take action in preventing storm water pollution through a resource-based campaign Web site, a neighborhood action kit, community clean up events, a network of community-based organizations serving as local program "messengers," attendance at large scale community events, and a speakers bureau designed to discuss involvement opportunities in local communities.
- ☛ **Strategic Partnerships** – Innovative partnerships with retailers, corporations, municipalities and non-profit organizations will be developed to increase the reach of campaign messages. Through public-private partnerships, the campaign will gain invaluable opportunities to educate our partners' members and customers on storm water pollution issues through joint mailings, point-of-purchase displays, in-store promotions, distribution of campaign collateral, and special discount programs.
- ☛ **Media Relations** – Strategic outreach will be conducted to general market, environmental and ethnic news outlets to bring the issue of storm water pollution to the forefront of media coverage in Los Angeles. To keep this issue highly visible, ongoing outreach to the media will include development of policy-oriented news stories as events occur, seasonal tie-ins to the storm water issue and storm water pollution reduction resource articles. This effort will underscore SWRCB's perspective on local and statewide storm water issues and raise visibility of the campaign's pollution prevention messages and educational efforts.
- ☛ **Youth Education** – Outreach to the youth of Los Angeles County will be a vital segment of the campaign. Children can be powerful catalysts for change within their schools, homes and communities. By providing educational information on storm water pollution prevention, they will be able to create a long-term, positive change in the fight to prevent pollution. The campaign will include the development and promotion of integrated water based education modules, as well as other means to reach children outside of the schools, including service learning projects and a public watershed education exhibit.
- ☛ **Business and Stakeholder Outreach** – Outreach will be conducted to key business, political and environmental stakeholders to educate them on key storm water issues, keep them apprised of and engaged in campaign efforts, and provide resources to aid in the reduction of storm water pollution output such as Best Management Practices (BMPs).
- ☛ **Statewide Resources** – To support future storm water efforts statewide, the campaign will work with other environmental stakeholders to develop a Web-based statewide resource directory of storm water pollution prevention strategies and materials. This will be an important, sustainable tool for use by other municipalities, and will capture, categorize, evaluate and promote use of the "best of the best" in currently available storm water materials from throughout California.

For more information about the *Erase the Waste* campaign and for additional environmental resources, log on to www.erasethewaste.com.